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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 75
By Jackson

A RESOLUTION to congratulate the Tennessee Farm Bureau for receiving the President's Award for a 12th consecutive year.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should salute those organizations that, through their extraordinary efforts, have improved the quality of life for the citizens of this state; and

WHEREAS, the Tennessee Farm Bureau is one such estimable institution; since being founded in 1921, this coalition's efforts have resulted in countless improvements for Tennessee's farmers; and

WHEREAS, the American Farm Bureau recently recognized the excellence of the Tennessee organization by awarding it the prestigious President's Award to the Tennessee delegation at their annual national convention; the Tennessee Farm Bureau has now earned the American Farm Bureau's highest honor for twelve consecutive years; and

WHEREAS, the Tennessee delegation earned eleven of a possible twelve Gold Stars; that total was unsurpassed by any state in the largest size category; and

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WHEREAS, the Tennessee Farm Bureau has established itself as the leading state bureau in America; it is the model organization to which other state bureaus look for inspiration and guidance; and

WHEREAS, for the 60th consecutive year, the Tennessee Farm Bureau increased its membership in 2000; the 12,003 new member families that joined the Bureau in 2000 marked the largest increase of any state branch; and

WHEREAS, the many years of increased membership have given the Tennessee Farm Bureau a total of 514,000 member families; Tennessee boasts the largest membership in the country, with nearly 100,000 more member families than the next largest state bureau; and

WHEREAS, the high quality of the Bureau's service is evidenced by a low attrition rate; their "backdoor loss" rate of 6.7% remains the lowest of any state organization; and

WHEREAS, the Tennessee Farm Bureau has experienced tremendous success and growth because of its commitment to its stated purpose of improving "the economic and social well-being of farm and rural people"; to meet this purpose, the Bureau maintains numerous programs, services, and outreaches that are all designed to benefit the farm families of Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, staying true to its motto, "Where Membership Means Value," the Bureau provides these services to its members at a negligible cost by judiciously managing the reasonable individual dues in order to provide outstanding value for the membership; and

WHEREAS, the Public Affairs Department of the Bureau provides a voice for the farmers of Tennessee through its involvement in legislative issues such as private property rights, taxation, and regulation; and

WHEREAS, conscious of the unique health needs of the rural farmer, the Bureau created Tennessee Rural Health, which promotes health and safety awareness and is the largest private health insurance provider in Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, the Bureau provides physical, financial, and mental security to its membership through Tennessee Farmers Mutual Insurance, which is the state's largest provider of rural property insurance and life insurance and the second largest provider of automobile insurance; and

WHEREAS, the Bureau ensures that its members remain abreast of current issues through its publication, *Tennessee Farm Bureau News*, which has the largest circulation of any periodical in Tennessee; additional information and commentary is broadcast on a daily Tennessee Radio News program and on *Farm Digest*, a weekly television show; and

WHEREAS, always conscious of the needs of its members, the Bureau maintains divisions that reflect the interests and needs of the farming population; the Tennessee Young Farmers and Ranchers is one such division that promotes fellowship and agricultural knowledge among the young farm families who will be providing much of our state's food supply for many years to come; and

WHEREAS, the Farm Bureau Women's Committee maintains an active and productive presence in the community through safety projects, food promotions, citizenship programs, and Ag-In-The-Classroom; and

WHEREAS, with other services such as record-keeping, tax advising, property protection reward programs, satellite marketing, and livestock marketing, the leaders of the Tennessee Farm Bureau have compiled a remarkable record of providing extraordinary value for the member families of the Bureau; as only the sixth President in the Bureau's eighty-year history, Flavius Barker heads the outstanding state leadership staff; and

WHEREAS, as a "grassroots" federation which believes that most needs are best understood and met at the local level, the Tennessee Farm Bureau relies heavily upon its county offices to ensure the members in each county that their concerns will be heard and that every consideration will be given to their wishes; examples of the exceptional leadership in the local offices include: Bryan Keeton, Fred Keeton, and Brent Lay of Decatur County; Jimmy

Duke, Edgar Meek, and Randal Cagle of Dickson County; Larry Paul Harris, Dale Ross, and Mike Sellers of Henderson County; Danny Rochelle, Wash Shouse, Jr., and Robert Ivy of Hickman County; S. J. Brazzle, Eric Mayberry, and Tommy Turner of Humphreys County; Bob Garner, Charles Robertson, and Bobby Belew of Lawrence County; James O. Hamm, Sr., Leroy Staggs, and Bud Malone of Lewis County; and Wallace Holder, David O'Guin, and Sandy Abrams of Perry County; and

WHEREAS, during eight decades of existence, the Tennessee Farm Bureau has established itself as a vital component of our state; it has provided the highest level of invaluable service to Tennesseans and has played a key role in the development of the high quality of life enjoyed by the people of this state; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, That we join the leadership and member families of the Tennessee Farm Bureau in celebrating the receipt of the President's Award and commend the people of the Bureau for the honorable and astute service to the people of Tennessee which precipitated the prestigious honor.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.